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ENJOYMENT FROM TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL

'Life's daily pleasures', including coffee and tobacco, give us the release we need in unwinding after our efforts and can improve the quality of our lives. A surprising point of view perhaps, especially as it is now being voiced by real scientists. 'The wholesome effects of stimulants are all too often forgotten", says Prof. Warburton.

The professor works at the university of Reading in Great Britain. He is a leading member of the international Arise organisation which is conducting research into the types of pleasure that some drugs can provide.

Colleague Petra Netter says, "The importance of pleasure lies in the fact that it is an antidote to negative states of mind. Pleasant experiences are actually very beneficial to health".

Arise carried out a survey in Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain and Italy. It appeared that in order to combat stress the first choice for most people is to take a bath or shower, to read or to watch television. Sex took only tenth place on the list of 'life's daily pleasures', scoring lower than coffee or tea and watching television. Only the Italians see sex as a typical form of daily pleasure.

In order to prevent stress or to unwind, 49 % said they drank coffee, 28 % said they smoked and 20% said they drank alcohol. Prof. Warburton is not entirely convinced by people who advise against the use of these stimulants : "Nowadays, the people who keep us informed on health issues are the new high-priests of pleasure, with the epidemiologists as their oracles. At the end of the day it is the government that determines whether a pleasure is illegal or acceptable, but taxable".

But Prof. Netter raises a finger of caution : "The pleasant experiences obtained from food, wine, coffee, smoking, tea, coke and chocolate are only beneficial when used in moderation.

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